

# Read

Luke 7:36-50

# Consider

Because we have all been formed and shaped by our unique histories and experiences, none of us see the world, faith, and life in exactly the same way. From our values and priorities, we can fall anywhere across the spectrum of viewpoints. This includes our ideology and perceptions of ourselves and what we would consider the best way to live our lives.

This can often lead to differences, conflicts, and tension. What is not inevitable is division, antagonism, and condemnation. In our passage today, we see how the disruption of a woman's presence and actions led to two very different types of responses from Jesus and Simon the Pharisee. One offers forgiveness, which produces gratitude and an expression of love. The other responded with distancing and judgment, which became a barrier from experiencing the gospel lived out.

When we gather together around a meal and differences and hurts are revealed, how will we respond? Will it drive a wedge between friends and family? Or will it be a space for the gospel to break through and lead to reconciliation and forgiveness? Around the table, we can be present to one another and to Christ's presence at work among us. Amidst differences, there is an invitation that He makes to live and relate to one another that embodies His hope and redemption. God's Kingdom breaks through into our world when we love and welcome others in His name. When we are motivated by His love and we interact with others in the way that He did.

Pastor Jon Nip

# Pray

Gracious God,

Show us how you work among us in the midst of differences and conflicts. We ask that we would have the heart and mind of Christ to prioritize relationships and reconciliation over winning debates, tolerance, and antagonism.

We pray that your Holy Spirit would show us how much we have needed your forgiveness and grace so that our love and welcome for others might grow. Forgive us when we have failed to live out your gospel. We ask that you give us a new imagination for the way you desire us to be engaged with others when we disagree so that we might reflect a life in your Kingdom.

Amen.

# Diving Deeper

What do the responses of Simon The Pharisee and of Jesus to the sinful woman reveal about their priorities and motivations? What do our responses to differences, disruptions, and hurts reveal about ourselves?

What might change in our relationship and interactions with others when we define them by what Christ has done and can do in their lives, instead of their past actions?

How do we grow in awareness of our own sin and need for forgiveness so that we can grow in our repentance and love for God? How might we extend the same grace outwardly toward others?

How can differences and disagreements be the space for the gospel to be leading us to reconciliation? How do we resist distancing and commit ourselves to work through challenges together?

How can we live closer **WITH GOD** in our lives?

How are we being **TRANSFORMED** to be more like Christ?

How is the Holy Spirit empowering us to imitate Christ in what we **DO** this week?